be needed. On the countrary these would facilitate quick counting after the polls and also help in checking booth capturing.

(c) The Election Commission in 1991 had recommended to Government the purchase of additional electronic voting machines to cover the entire country.

(d) In May 1993, Government requested the Election Commission to use the available electronic voting machines to the extent feasible in the Assembly elections that were then to be held for Delhi as also in other elections in order to demonstrate the reliability and versatility of the machines.

(e) and (f). Data relating to comparative expenditure are not available. However, it is expected that the use of electronic voting machines would, in the long run, reduce Government expenses on elections.

Value of Rupee

5614. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there was a decline in the value of Indian rupee during the last month of February in comparison to that of the American dollar, Pound, Sterling, Deutsche Mark, Frank and Yen;

(b) whether the rate of export growth was 22.1 per cent in terms of dollar during April, 1995 to January, 1996 whereas the rate of import growth was 30.1 resulting in heavy decrease in the foreign exchange reserves;

(c) whether the average bank loans of Government increased by 11.7 per cent last year; and

(d) if so, the facts thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) The table below shows the monthly average value of the Indian rupee in comparison to the foreign currencies mentioned in the question, during January and February 1996 :

	Rupee per Unit of foreign currency (Average of buying and selling rates)	
	Jan., 1996	Feb., 1996
American dollar	35.738	36.634
Pound Sterling	54.769	56.272
Deutsche Mark	24.514	24.989
Frank	7.133	7.271
Yen	33.910	34.630
(Rupees per 100 Yen)		

The above table shows that value of the Indian rupee declined in February, 1996 in comparison to January, 1996.

(b) There was a decline in foreign exchange reserves during April 95-January, 96 partly in reflection of booyant economic activities resulting in import growth in excess of export growth. Movement in the foreign exchange reserves during any penod broadly reflects all external transactions recorded in the country's Balance of Payment and not only trade transactions. During April 1995 to January 1996, apart from the trade deficit, there was a moderation in capital inflows and higher debt servicing payments, which also contributed to the decline in the foreign exchange reserves of India. Part of the reserve loss was recovered during March, 96.

(c) Net Bank Credit (both of Reserve Bank and other banks) to Government (Centre and State) increased by 9.1 per cent in 1994-95 and 15.7 per cent in 1995-96.

(d) Government is making every effort to reduce expenditure and increase revenue.

Justice to the Farm Labourers

5615. SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any efforts are being made by the Government for providing cheaper and prompt justice to the farm labourers and small farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : (a) to (c). Under Section 12(h) of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, which has been brought into force with effect from 9th November, 1995, every person, including farm labourers and small farmers, who has to file or defend a case shall be entitled to legal services if that person is in receipt of annual income less than Rs. 9,000/- or such other highr amount as may be prescribed by the State Government, if the case is before a court other than the Supreme Court, and less than Rs. 12,000/- or such other higher amount as may be prescribed by the Central Government, if the case is before the Supreme Court.

[English]

Allocation of Coal

5616. SHRI K. PRADHANI : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether allocation of coal is made on linkage and sponsorship basis; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir

(b) As per the distribution policy, coal supplies are arranged only to actual consumers of coal as per linkages established and/or sponsorship issued by the sponsoring authorities. Linkages to consumers in the power sector are being given by the Standing Linkage Committee (SLC) set up by the Government in the Ministry of Coal. All consumers in the Steel Sector are given linkages by Linkage Committees set up by the Ministry of Steel. Similarly, all consumers in Cement Sector are given linkages by a Linkage Committee set up by the Government in the Ministry of Coal. Other consumers in the non-core sector i.e. industries other than power, cement and iron and steel are given linkages by a Linkage committee set up by the the coal companies themselves. However, a No Objection Certificate is required to be obtained from the Government whenever the coal companies wish to give a linkage for a quantity of more than 5000 tonnes per month in favour of such consumers.

[Translation]

Job to Youth in Industries

5617. SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the number of youths likely to get jobs in the industries set up by the Union Government and industrialists and the target fixed, if any, in this regard; and

(b) the number of persons likely to get jobs in the industrial sector in the coming years alongwith the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b). The rate of growth of employment generation in industrial, or in any other sector is contingent upon pace and pattern of the GDP growth in the sector. Projections for future are made as part of Five Year Plan exercises. The Eighth Five Year Plan had targetted an employment growth of 3.7% per annum in the manufacturing sector.

[English]

Article 371-F

5618. SHRI BHIM PRASAD DAHAL : Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have replaced the old laws of Sikkim like Income Tax Manual of 1940s without the consent of the people of Sikkim, and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : (a) and (b). Sir, the Central Acts are generally extended to the State of Sikkim in consultation with the Government of that State. However, keeping in view the overall national interest the Income-tax Act, 1961, the Wealth-tax Act, 1957 and the Gift-tax Act, 1958 were extended to that State without the concurrence of the State Government in exercise of the powers conferred under clause (n) of article 371-F of the Constitution.

[Translation]

Sand Policy

5619. SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether a new policy has been formulated to extract the sand in U.P.;

(b) if so, the districts where leases have been awarded by the Government so far in this regard;

(c) whether the leases have also been awarded in Jalaur, Banda, Fatehpur and Allahabad;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the date by which the leases will be awarded ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (e). The subject matter does not relate to this Ministry. Information is being collected from the Ministry of Mines and the UP State Government and would be placed before Parliament on receipt at the earliest.

Agro Based Industries in Rural Areas

5620. SHRI PAWAN DIWAN :
SHRI MURALIDHAR JENA :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the steps taken by the Union Government to set up agro-based industries in rural areas during the year 1995-96, State-wise; and

(b) the success achieved by the Government so far in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

Import of Machine for Hydel Power Scheme

5621. SHRI N.J. RATHWA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have received any proposals/memoranda from the State Government of Gujarat in regard to import of machinery from abroad for Hydel Power Scheme;